

AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING MINUTES

December 6, 2007

Members Present: Daniel Clapp, Elsie Fetterman, Janet Gorth, Doris Holden, Rosemary Kofler, Tom McAuley, Stephanie O'Keeffe, Barbara Sutherland

Absent: David Yaukey

Select Board Liaison: absent

Staff Present: Nancy Pagano (Director/Program Director), Maura Plante (Assistant Director/Services), Karen Erman (Administrative Assistant)

Guests: Paul Anziano (President of Hulmes), Elizabeth Armstrong and Joel Gordon (Stay Put), Nicole Rohan (PVTA), Lisa White (Director, Senior Health Services), Giovanna Mix (Lunch Site Director Sub), Marge Babb

Welcome:

Barbara Sutherland, Chair, called the Council on Aging meeting to order at 9:09 AM.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

A spelling error was corrected in the October 25, 2007 minutes.

The minutes of the October 25 and October 30, 2007 meetings were approved and accepted.

Senior Trust Treasurer's Report:

Doris provided a handout indicating a balance of \$94,994.10 in the Senior Trust.

Karen reported contributions of \$1,910 to the Friends since the end of September. \$1,095 of that money was received following the fundraising request in the last Senior Spirit.

Nancy and Deb Jankowski still need to complete the application to get the final certificate of non-profit status, even though we are all approved.

NEW BUSINESS

New HVES Lunch Site Director Substitute:

Nancy introduced **Giovanna Mix**, the newest staff member, as substitute director of the lunch site program. She works with Ferne. Her salary is paid by monies received from HVES. **Giovanna** expressed gratitude for the opportunity to give to others and to do such rewarding work.

"Stay Put" fact-finding meeting:

Nancy introduced the "Stay Put" concept of helping people to live independently in their homes as long as possible and have the services they need. That concept is totally in alignment with the mission of the Senior Center and COA. Nancy introduced guests **Elizabeth Armstrong** and **Joel Gordon**, members of the "Stay Put" committee.

Elizabeth explained that "Stay Put" began a couple years ago when Sara Wolff sent out a survey to people in the community asking about their plans for how they would like to be living as they got older. Interested people have been meeting ever since. They hoped to establish an organization supported by member fees and donations, which in turn would pay for the services needed by elders such as snow shoveling, shopping, etc. "Stay Put" hoped to follow the model of Beacon Village in Boston. The logistical problems in creating such a 501C3 organization seemed daunting however, and the local community could not realistically achieve the monetary contributions that Boston was able to get. Meanwhile, another organization, which provides services to elders, began a feasibility study in the summer of 2006 to see if they could provide a stay-at-home program. "Stay Put" decided to look at the results of their study rather than duplicate the efforts. Thus far no results have been reported. Now, "Stay Put" is looking at how they can perhaps work with the Friends of the Amherst Senior Center to provide services. "Stay Put" would not actually provide the services. They would assist Maura perhaps as the matchmaker between the elder and the service provider.

Elsie mentioned that Vermont has a program for those who are Medicaid eligible in which a nurse goes to the home of the elder to assess which services are needed. Elsie will provide us with contact information.

Nancy mentioned the services that Maura arranges for elders such as drivers, snow shoveling, or personal care. The difficulty is that one person can only do so much and more help is needed to organize such services.

Department of Elder Affairs "Standards of Independence":

Nancy distributed a handout on appropriate behavior for senior center attendants. She asked members to review the document and be prepared to discuss it at our next meeting in order to develop our own policy.

Gazette Insert for 40th Senior Center Anniversary, May 2008:

Nancy reiterated her request for volunteers to help plan the 40th anniversary. One thing to consider is a special several page insert in the Gazette. The cost is \$1500.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

PVTA Transition Plan:

Nicole Rohan talked about the transition that will take place December 12-15. The exact date is contingent on the Verizon schedule. PVTA and Paul Anziano at Hulmes have been working since October to make the transition as seamless as possible. They went through the plan in detail and are prepared with backup plans. Extra staffing will be on hand for phone calls on Friday, December 14. The Customer Service office will be staffed on Saturday, December 15. Photo IDs will be taken at the Senior Center Monday, December 10.

Budget Update:

Nancy thanked Stephanie for her input and tremendous help in re-writing the Senior Center Objectives for 2009. Nancy is concerned that we may be asked to cut our budget even further than the already 7.5% cuts. Personnel had the largest cut. Filling Marlene's Step 11 position with a Step 4 level individual will offset that.

Stephanie said that at the last Select Board meeting Larry indicated that the budget might not be as dire as he previously expected. Larry submits his budget on January 17, 2008. Department heads will now make their budget presentations to the Select Board and the Finance committee together.

Program Assistant Position:

Nancy reported that the Program Assistant position has not been filled yet.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

250th Anniversary Committee:

David was not present to report on the meetings. David withdrew from the committee for personal reasons. Nancy requested another volunteer to represent the COA.

Senior Health Services progress report:

Lisa provided a handout showing her activity and the reasons for patient visits. In November she had 30 client visits; 8 were new clients, 22 were repeat visits. Lisa claims continual activity during her office hours.

Nancy said the purpose of the \$1000 grant from the Amherst Club would be to allow for more nursing hours and to allow the nurse to go out and visit elders in their homes.

Nancy added that Town Counsel has approved the contractual agreement between the SHS and VNA, which includes the VNA staffing the nursing center if Lisa could not be here. Nancy met with the Senior Health Advisory Group. They are committed to helping the SHS with ongoing support and grant money.

Highland Valley Elder Services:

Janet reported that the December 3 meeting was cancelled due to bad weather. The previous meeting was an organizational event with an auditor.

Comprehensive Plan:

Rosemary reported. The Work Groups completed their Strategies for implementing the Goals and Objectives, which were based on community input, in September. The Strategies were posted on the Planning Amherst Together website. The public responded with comments and suggestions, which were all taken into consideration. In addition, an Open House was held on September 27. About 80 people attended and more comments were received. ACP compiled all information into the Draft Master Plan. Members of the CPC reviewed the draft and most members felt it needed tweaking. Consequently, a Draft Review Subcommittee of 12 CPC members was formed to go over the Master Plan and make necessary changes and final edits. It has taken extensive time and work. ACP graciously extended the deadline for their contract until early December. The sub-committee will present the edited version to CPC on December 11 to review the changes. After that meeting the draft chapters will be amended as necessary, then sent to ACP for one final rewrite. When the draft Master Plan is completed a report will be made to Town Meeting. Prior to Town Meeting, TM members will receive an Executive Summary of the draft Plan by mail. They will also be informed that the full text of the plan will be available on-line or in printed version, at cost (about \$4.20), from the Planning Department.

STAFF REPORTS:**Bar Association Grant:**

Maura discussed the grant, which provides legal services at no cost to eligible elders - the Hampshire Elder Law Program (H.E.L.P.). Attorneys that work under this grant are paid \$50/hour.

Nancy talked about the NSF Grant awarded to Smith College and UMass to see how computers can help older people remain independent in their home. Computer equipment will be installed in our Computer Gallery on December 7, 2007, which will enable those who have agreed to participate in the study to be trained to use a Web cam in order to see people while they communicate with them.

A Craft Sale will also take place as a fundraiser on December 7.

Thanksgiving Day had a large increase in the number of home delivered meals (33 compared to 10 in previous years). About 65 people ate at the Center. There were many donations. Stephanie praised Nancy for her amazing contribution and organization of the food set up and delivery on Thanksgiving Day.

Stephanie asked Council members to consider semi-monthly meetings. Our monthly meetings are highly informational, leaving little or no time for active participation and to work on issues facing the COA. For instance, Nancy could use help in preparing a presentation for the Select Board and Finance Committee. Individual schedules did not allow for a meeting between Larry's budget presentation and our next scheduled COA meeting. Therefore, it was decided to have a brief business meeting at the beginning of our next COA meeting followed by work on Nancy's budget presentation.

The COA meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM.

The next meeting will be held on February 7, 2008, at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemary Kofler, Secretary